

Application No. 09/806,775  
Amendment dated October 25, 2005  
Reply to Office Action of April 26, 2005

Docket No.: 20386-00294-US

### **AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions and listing of the claims in this application.

#### **Listing of the Claims:**

##### **Claims 1-36 (Canceled)**

37. (New) A method for forming multicomponent glass particles and spraying the glass particles to a target, the method comprising:

supplying a fuel gas through a nozzle of a spraying device to produce a flame;

introducing oxygen to the flame through the nozzle;

introducing a first glass component to the flame through the nozzle such that the first glass component reacts to form first oxide particles, wherein the first glass component is a gaseous or vaporous substance;

introducing a second glass component to a vicinity of the flame through the nozzle, wherein the second glass component comprises a liquid solution containing a rare earth metal;

introducing an atomizing gas to the vicinity of the flame through the nozzle;

atomizing the second glass component with the atomizing gas in the vicinity of the flame so as to form second oxide particles; and

wherein the first oxide particles and the second oxide particles combine with each other so as to form multicomponent glass particles comprising the rare earth metal.

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38. (New) The method according to claim 37, wherein said first glass component, said second glass component and said fuel gas are supplied to the flame coaxially.

39. (New) The method according to claim 38, wherein said first glass component is silicon or germanium tetrachloride and said second glass component is a solution containing erbium nitrate, water or alcohol, and a form of aluminum which is soluble in water or alcohol, such that multicomponent glass particles can be formed to manufacture active fiber.

40. (New) The method according to claim 37, wherein said first glass component is silicon or germanium tetrachloride and said glass component is a solution containing erbium nitrate, water or alcohol, and a form of aluminum which is soluble in water or alcohol, such that multicomponent glass particles can be formed to manufacture active fiber.

41. (New) A method according to claim 37, wherein said multicomponent glass particles are homogenous multicomponent particles.

42. (New) A method for forming multicomponent glass particles and spraying the glass particles to a target, the method comprising:

supplying a fuel gas through a nozzle of a spraying device to produce a flame;

introducing oxygen to the flame through the nozzle;

introducing a first glass component to the flame through the nozzle such that the first glass component reacts to form first oxide particles, wherein the first glass component is a gaseous or vaporous substance, the first glass component comprising silicon tetrachloride or germanium tetrachloride;

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introducing a second glass component to a vicinity of the flame through the nozzle,  
wherein the second glass component is a solution containing rare earth ion, water or alcohol, and  
a form of aluminum which is soluble in water or alcohol;

introducing an atomizing gas to the vicinity of the flame through the nozzle;

atomizing the second glass component with the atomizing gas in the vicinity of the flame  
so as to form second oxide particles; and

wherein the first oxide particles and the second oxide particles combine with each other  
so as to form multicomponent glass particles comprising rare earth metal.

43. (New) The method according to claim 42, wherein said first glass component,  
said second glass component and said fuel gas are supplied to the flame coaxially.

44. (New) A method for forming multicomponent glass particles and spraying the  
glass particles to a target by a spraying device, the spraying device comprising a nozzle including  
tubes for delivering fluids to be used in the method, the method comprising:

supplying a fuel gas through the nozzle of a spraying device to produce a flame;

introducing oxygen to the flame through the nozzle;

introducing a first glass component to the flame through a gas tube in the nozzle such that  
the first glass component reacts to form first oxide particles, wherein the first glass component in  
the tube consists of a gaseous or vaporous substance;

introducing a second glass component to a vicinity of the flame through a liquid tube in  
the nozzle, wherein the second glass component consists of a liquid solution containing a rare  
earth metal;

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introducing an atomizing gas to the vicinity of the flame through the nozzle;

atomizing the second glass component with the atomizing gas in the vicinity of the flame so as to form second oxide particles; and

wherein the first oxide particles and the second oxide particles combine with each other so as to form multicomponent glass particles comprising the rare earth metal.

45. (New) The method according to claim 44, wherein said first glass component is silicon or germanium tetrachloride and said second glass component is a solution containing erbium nitrate, water or alcohol, and a form of aluminum which is soluble in water or alcohol, such that multicomponent glass particles can be formed to manufacture active fiber.

46. (New) A method for forming multicomponent glass particles and spraying the glass particles to a target, the method comprising:

supplying a fuel gas through a nozzle of a spraying device to produce a flame;

introducing oxygen to the flame through the nozzle;

introducing a first glass component to the flame through the nozzle such that the first glass component reacts to form first oxide particles, wherein the first glass component is a gaseous or vaporous substance;

introducing a second glass component to a vicinity of the flame through the nozzle, wherein the second glass component comprises a liquid solution containing a rare earth metal; and

atomizing the second glass component with the fuel gas in the vicinity of the flame so as to form second oxide particles;

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wherein the first oxide particles and the second oxide particles combine with each other so as to form multicomponent glass particles comprising the rare earth metal.

47. (New) The method according to claim 46, wherein said first glass component, said second glass component and said fuel gas are supplied to the flame coaxially.

48. (New) The method according to claim 47, wherein said first glass component is silicon or germanium tetrachloride and said glass component is a solution containing erbium nitrate, water or alcohol, and a form of aluminum which is soluble in water or alcohol, such that multicomponent glass particles can be formed to manufacture active fiber.

49. (New) The method according to claim 47, wherein said first glass component is silicon or germanium tetrachloride and said second glass component is a solution containing erbium nitrate, water or alcohol, and a form of aluminum which is soluble in water or alcohol, such that multicomponent glass particles can be formed to manufacture active fiber.

50. (New) The method according to claim 46, wherein said multicomponent glass particles are homogenous multicomponent particles.

51. (New) A method for forming multicomponent glass particles and spraying the particles to a target by a spraying device comprising a nozzle which comprises a liquid tube, a first gas tube, a second gas tube and a third gas tube, the liquid tube and the first gas tube being arranged in such a manner that the first gas tube surrounds the liquid tube, the method comprising:

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supplying fuel gas through the first gas tube of the nozzle to produce a flame;

introducing oxygen to the flame through the third gas tube of the nozzle;

introducing a first glass component in a gaseous or vaporous form to the flame through the second gas tube such that the first glass component reacts to form first oxide particles, the first glass component comprising silicon tetrachloride or germanium tetrachloride;

introducing a second glass component to a vicinity of the flame through the liquid tube, wherein the second glass component comprises a liquid solution containing a rare earth metal;

atomizing the second glass component with the fuel gas in the vicinity of the flame so as to form second oxide particles; and

wherein the first oxide particles and the second oxide particles combine with each other so as to form multicomponent glass particles comprising the rare earth metal.

52. (New) The method according to claim 51, wherein said second glass component is a solution containing erbium nitrate, water or alcohol, and a form of aluminum which is soluble in water or alcohol, such that multicomponent glass particles can be formed to manufacture active fiber.